



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2021-0188; Project Identifier MCAI-2020-00642-R]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Helicopters Model SA-365N, SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters. This proposed AD was prompted by a report that damage (scorch marks) was found on an internal life raft installation that contained a half rescue kit. This proposed AD would require identifying the part number and serial number of each half rescue kit located in the internal life raft installation and, depending on the findings, inspecting the life raft for damage, inspecting the condition of the flashlight battery, testing the flashlight battery, and replacing the life raft or flashlight battery (including the leak test) as applicable, as specified in a European Aviation Safety Agency (now European Union Aviation Safety Agency) (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For material that will be incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 0000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 817-222-5110. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0188.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0188; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kathleen Arrigotti, Program Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax (206) 231-3218; email kathleen.arrigotti@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2021-0188; Project Identifier MCAI-2020-00642-R” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this proposal.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Kathleen Arrigotti, Program Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax (206) 231-3218; email

kathleen.arrigotti@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Discussion

The EASA (now European Union Aviation Safety Agency), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2016-0028, dated February 15, 2016 (EASA AD 2016-0028) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus Helicopters Model SA-365N, SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters.

This proposed AD was prompted by a report that damage (scorch marks) was found on an internal life raft installation that contained a half rescue kit. Investigation revealed that the damage was caused by an unsuitable folding process for the life raft, which led to compression of the flashlight battery in the half rescue kit. This compression caused an electrolyte leakage, followed by a short-circuit that damaged the internal life raft. The FAA is proposing this AD to address leakage of the flashlight battery in a half rescue kit, which could result in damage to the internal life raft, and subsequent failure of the internal life raft to deploy (for example after a ditching), which could impede or prevent safe evacuation of the occupants from the helicopter. See the MCAI for additional background information.

Related IBR Material under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2016-0028 describes procedures for identifying the part number and serial number of each half rescue kit located in the internal life raft installation, inspecting the life raft for damage (scorch marks), inspecting the condition of the flashlight battery (including cracks, impacts, swelling, damage, distorted case, and the connecting wire), testing the flashlight battery (turning on the flashlight), and replacing the life raft or flashlight battery (including the leak test). This material is reasonably

available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, the FAA has been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is proposing this AD because the FAA evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2016-0028 described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD and except as discussed under "Differences Between this Proposed AD and the MCAI."

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA initially worked with Airbus and EASA to develop a process to use certain EASA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has since coordinated with other manufacturers and civil aviation authorities (CAAs) to use this process. As a result, EASA AD 2016-0028 will be incorporated by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2016-0028 in its entirety, through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in the EASA AD does not mean that operators need comply only with that

section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in the EASA AD. Service information specified in EASA AD 2016-0028 that is required for compliance with EASA AD 2016-0028 will be available on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0188 after the FAA final rule is published.

Differences Between this Proposed AD and the MCAI

Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2016-0028 specifies to return damaged life rafts to the manufacturer, this AD does not include that requirement.

Where EASA AD 2016-0028 refers to its effective date or to January 7, 2016 (the effective date of EASA AD 2015-0242), this AD requires compliance within 3 months after the effective date of this AD.

Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2016-0028 specifies that trained and authorized Zodiac Aerospace personnel must do the inspection of the half rescue kit, this AD does not require that Zodiac Aerospace personnel do the inspection.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this proposed AD affects 30 helicopters of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs for required actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
1 work-hour X \$85 per hour = \$85	\$3,000	\$3,085	\$92,550

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any necessary on-condition actions that would be required based on the results of any required actions. The FAA has no way of determining the number of helicopters that might need these on-condition actions:

Estimated costs of on-condition actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
7.5 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$637.50	\$77,900	\$78,537.50

According to Zodiac Aerospace, some or all of the costs of this proposed AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected operators. The FAA does not control warranty coverage for affected operators. As a result, the FAA has included all known costs in the cost estimate.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

- 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

- 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

Airbus Helicopters: Docket No. FAA-2021-0188; Project Identifier MCAI-2020-00642-R.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected Airworthiness Directives (ADs)

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Model SA-365N, SA-365N1, AS-365N2, and AS 365 N3 helicopters, certificated in any category, as identified in European Aviation Safety Agency (now European Union Aviation Safety Agency) (EASA) AD 2016-0028, dated February 15, 2016 (EASA AD 2016-0028).

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 2564, Life Raft.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a report that damage (scorch marks) was found on an internal life raft installation that contained a half rescue kit. Investigation revealed that the damage was caused by an unsuitable folding process for the life raft, which led to compression of the flashlight battery in the half rescue kit. The FAA is issuing this AD to address leakage of the flashlight battery in a half rescue kit, which could result in damage to the internal life raft, and subsequent failure of the internal life raft to deploy (for example after a ditching), which could impede or prevent safe evacuation of the occupants from the helicopter.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2016-0028.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2016-0028

(1) Where EASA AD 2016-0028 refers to its effective date or to January 7, 2016 (the effective date of EASA AD 2015-0242), this AD requires compliance within 3 months after the effective date of this AD.

(2) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2016-0028 does not apply to this AD.

(3) Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2016-0028 specifies to return certain parts, this AD does not include that requirement.

(4) Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2016-0028 specifies that trained and authorized Zodiac Aerospace personnel must do the inspection

of the half rescue kit, this AD does not require that Zodiac Aerospace personnel do the inspection.

(i) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):

The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(j) Related Information

(1) For EASA AD 2016-0028, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 0000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 817-222-5110. This material may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0188.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Kathleen Arrigotti, Program Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax (206) 231-3218; email kathleen.arrigotti@faa.gov.

Issued on March 11, 2021.

Ross Landes, Deputy Director for Regulatory Operations,
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2021-05883 Filed: 3/22/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/23/2021]